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OKC 90-0717
DD/S 70-4013

33 SEP 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: GAO Survey of Refugee Programs in Vietnam and Laos

1. On 21 September 1970 Mr. Roy Jenney telephoned to advise that the report to the Kennedy Subcommittee on refugees was completed and available for Agency review. Mr. Jenney offered to bring the report to the Agency but I counter-suggested that Mr. [] and I would visit him.

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2. On 22 September Mr. [] and I visited GAO Headquarters where arrangements were made by Mr. Jenney for us to read the pertinent sections of the GAO report in the office of his superior, Mr. Stromvall. Mr. Jenney pointed out that the report had been shown to AID officials on 21 September and they had identified two places of possible Agency worry -- sections where specific numbers in geography were set out.

3. The total paper work consists of four separate reports:

a. Review of Refugee Relief Program in Laos

b. Need for Improvement in Control over Relief
Commodities Shipped to Laos

c. Information on Accidental Bombings in Laos

d. Review of the Civilian Health and War Casualty
Program in Laos

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4. We were given reports a. and d. above. Mr. [] took the general review and I read the health paper. We compared notes after reading and agreed that these reports, with possibly a few small points, were acceptable to the Agency. We asked Mr. Jenney to delete the specific listing in one section of the general report which tied "our" assets to precise geography. We also asked in the health report for wording changes or deletions which would indicate that AID economic assistance funds were being used for intelligence activities -- the specific wording pointed

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to funding for "certain activities" of an intelligence agency as distinguished from paramilitary personnel and their dependents.

5. The reports stressed the limited view gained by the GAO team and specified that for that reason, as well as the general conditions in Laos, GAO was not in a position to make any recommendations. On the medical side there was acknowledgment of notable achievement even though, by western standards, conditions in hospitals and dispensaries leave much to be desired. The management of the public health programs was rather sharply criticized, the thrust being that a program of the present scope could not be operated by a single man personal procedure arrangement.

6. The health report also pointed out that a proposal had been forwarded to Washington for a change in funding which would establish a cost sharing arrangement similar to that set up for rice.

7. Mr. Jenney agreed that the specific geography and related numbers could be adjusted but he was not able to agree with the suggested adjustments in the medical report without consultation with Mr. Stromvall. He pointed out that the Public Health Director, Dr. Weldon, was very explicit in distinguishing the "teams" in Southern Laos from paramilitary and in complaining bitterly that he could gain no information concerning the medical supplies which were provided to the Agency for these people.

8. Mr. Jenney telephoned later in the afternoon on 22 September to advise that both of the changes we had requested were being made.

(signed) John W. Coffey

John W. Coffey
Assistant Deputy Director
for Support

ADD/S:JWC/ms (28 Sept 70)

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